

EXHIBIT Z

TEST

by JERRY BASSETT



The 600-TIMPS

Dollar for dollar, cc for cc, feature for feature, the best all around, everyday snowmobiles are the 600cc displacement sports machines. Not as fast as the 800s, these 600s are the sports cars of the snow. They handle, corner and provide all the rapid transit down a trail that any snowmobiler will ever truly need.

What you'll find in this category are three sleds with very different personalities. The Rev from Ski-Doo reflects a completely new thought process when it comes to rider position. Everything about the rider-forward design is new. But all components on the Rev aren't. For example, even with 13-inches of travel, the SC-10 III was an adequate, but not great suspension on the traditional chassis MXZ. Incorporated into the Rev, the rear suspension, has become exceptional, with a few tweaks. Did the suspension tuners get that much brighter?

Ski-Doo Rev X 600 HO



No, the Rev's rider forward positioning places the rider's butt ahead of the worst bump action. Imagine a kid's seesaw. Now imagine that you are at the center of the seesaw. You are in a position that neither

senses the up or downs of the seesaw's ends. Frankly, because of this positioning, Ski-Doo could probably get away with an old-fashioned bottle wheel suspension.

Arctic Cat has gone the more conventional route of rider legs straight out and butt closer to the rear idlers.

When you ride the sled, you realize that Cat

has been pretty clever in moving its rider into a very sound control position. Instead of raising the rider, Cat gets him to hunker down a bit more, moves him forward a titch, and provides a sweet action in the rear suspension to soak up stutter bumps and those deep suspension sucking moguls as well. Cat seems to utilize almost all of its 13.5 inches of rear



These are the
best all-around
rides for 2004.

travel. When you first ride an F-series Cat you think the suspension is all sag. But when you hit the first mogul section, you understand that Cat engineers have designed this rear FasTrack unit to utilize nearly all the stroke in its shock action. With its gas-charged reservoir shock action and torsion spring control, the suspension goes from soft to medium to stiff action while rarely (if ever) bottoming out.

Wishbone vs. Trailing Arm

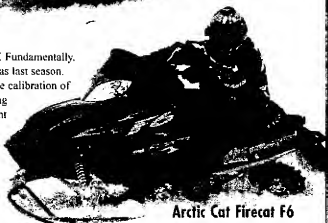
No one has more familiarity with double wishbone front suspensions in sleds than Cat—and it shows. The AWS-6 front end not only absorbs bumps well, but it tracks precisely through the corners, too.

Let's give Ski-Doo some credit here as well. Its second year with an A-arm front end shows marked improvement over the

first season of the REV. Fundamentally, the system is the same as last season.

What has changed is the calibration of shock innards and spring rates. For 2004, the front is very precise. The roll center seems very much improved and much better controlled than last season's protos.

Polaris, with its 600cc ProX2, has taken a third approach to the high performance sports class. Right away, you'll notice the trademark Polaris IFS trailing arm front end. Basing the X2 on the ProX chassis, Polaris retains an extruded bulkhead with high shock towers and a crossover support



Arctic Cat Firecat F6

to maintain torsional rigidity. The taller towers give the front shocks a more upright position for improved action and stroke.

We sensed that the X2's trailing arms transmitted suspension action up to the rider where the links mount on the chassis. We probably wouldn't have commented on

it if the other sleds used trailing arms, but the A-arm front ends definitely are smoother to ride in the big whoops.

Polaris' seating position really seems to be a reaction to the Ski-Doo Rev: Move the rider forward. Sit him two-inches taller. All this on the ProX platform that wasn't conceived to be a rider-forward sled. Looking like a Rev is different than being a Rev.

The entire Rev platform is purported to be a rider-forward platform. Cat's F6 is a package designed to be a hunker-in.

low engine placement go-fast machine. Polaris' X2 is a

repositioned short

coupled ProX

that's trying to be

a next generation Rev. It

isn't.

Polaris ProX2 600

new Suzuki-built twin Ski-Doo's 600cc high output twin showed just over 117 horses

in last year's

Shoot-Out

Polaris' Liberty

twin ran our

dyno up to 110

hp last year, but

the year before

rang up 116.4 hp

on the same dyno.

Bottom line: all

three are good run-

ners, but

based on the

F7's incredi-

ble engine

strength,

we'll be

betting

on its F6

sibling to

have a

similar her-

itage and power.

You can get the non-SnoPro F6 Cat with the battery-less electronic fuel injection instead of the SnoPro's twin 40mm flatslides. For everyday-all-conditions riding, we'd opt for the EFI setup as Cat has this system down to a sweet science. Easy starting. The EFI accounts for barometer ups and downs, temperature changes, etc.

With the Ski-Doo 600 MNX, we'd go with the SDI (semi-direct injection) for the same reasons. Based on our personal experiences with a Sea-Doo direct injection watercraft, we recommend the system because you get better fuel mileage, cleaner combustion and much more consistent throttle response. Fuel economy should be a reason to pop for the SDI as the carbure-



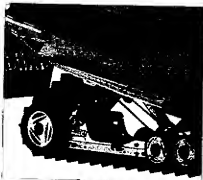
The new seat moves the X2 rider forward and taller. Its similar but not the same as Skidoos Rev.

Under The Hood

Riding positions and styling aside, these three sleds go about creating performance in interesting ways. Cat created an all new 600cc engine. Ski-Doo adds a semi-direct injection 600cc to the mix. Polaris returns its stout Made in the USA Liberty twin.

On paper, the Cat claims 118 hp for the

Specifications	MX Z Rev X 600	Firecat F6	ProX2 600
	1600cc twin, liquid cooled two stroke, DPM, 594cc	Suzuki twin, liquid cooled two stroke, EFI, TPS, 599cc	Liberty twin, liquid cooled, digital CDI w/TPS, 599cc
	Single tuned pipe	APV w/ tuned pipe & canister	VES, Single pipe
	43"	43"	42.5"
	AWS-VI SC-10 III	AWS-VI ProTrack	ProX IFS Pro X
	15"x121"x1.0"	13.5"x128"x1.0"	15"x121"x1.25"
	10.6	12.6	11.8
	464 lbs.	460 lbs.	477 lbs.
	\$8,249.00	\$9,499	\$8,349



In the Rev chassis, the SC-10 III suspension delivers a consistent ride unlike any other.



Car's new F7 series is an excellent evolution of the "traditional" sled.

retted HO we rode last season definitely liked its petrol products.

Polaris' Liberty twin sticks with twin 38mm flatslide carbs, but comes with the expected digital electronic ignition and innovative fuel octane switch, which retards the ignition in case you encounter poor quality fuel. As with Ski-Doo's Rotax twin, the Polaris Liberty twin comes with an electronic reverse.

The Polaris features its own P85 drive clutch, but has worked with Team Industries to provide a higher performance secondary driven unit. Using snowcross experience, the Polaris drivetrain is designed to gain a holeshot advantage. Based on last year's *American Snowmobiler* Shoot-Out, this system proved quickest in the 600 class in accelerating from 0-60 feet. That was with a sled giving away upwards of 7 hp to its closest competitor!

Arctic Cat uses a Cat design of rpm-sensing drive and roller cam secondary. Ski-Doo relies on its TRA-III drive and driven. As last year's grass drag results showed, the Rev gets out of the hole well.

The Bottom Line

The Rev from Ski-Doo is an exceptional snowmobile. This second year version has improved dramatically from the inaugural season. The chassis layout is extremely comfortable and this nonsense about "getting used to it" is just that—nonsense. Whether you've been riding one season or 30 seasons, you won't have any problems. In fact, we'd bet that long term veterans may actually like this setup better than what they rode before. Because you sit in the "rocking chair" section of the suspensions and because you can involve your legs and thighs in the bump absorption and because you don't have to stress your arms by pulling yourself forward for bumps... well, you get the idea. The Rev is easy to ride, saves wear and tear on your body and lets you put on easier miles in a

day than the "legs out, butt back" seating that tradition dictated.

From a performance standpoint, all three are in the same league. They are all capable of handling virtually any trail condition. We think the Ski-Doo Rev will handle them better overall, but the Cat is definitely the best of the "conventional" position sleds. To us, the Polaris is merely a stop gap measure to a totally new generation of Polaris snowmobiles. The Polaris X2 series is designed to give loyal fans a Rev-like sled based on XC components. For loyal Polaris fans, that may be enough. At least Polaris hopes so, because Ski-Doo's market share gains have come mostly from Polaris.

Cat fans have good reasons to stay loyal. The F6 series is very strong under

the hood. The suspensions are supple and nimble. Quality was an issue with the F7 last season, but we'll be very surprised if the F6 suffers that same fate. So, bottom line: Cat is a very good bet.

All three models have the expected key ergonomic features like heated handlebars and thumbwarmers. We found wind protection superior on the Cat and of negligible value on the Rev and X2. You get gas-charged shocks and above average suspensions in all three. Polaris offers exclusive Walker Evans remote reservoir compression-adjustable shocks—front and rear. But, it's not enough to lift the Polaris above third choice in our estimation. We like the REV first, but could live comfortably with the new F6 as the best of the traditional chassis models. AS

YAMAHA SXViper S



Making a good sled better!

When we looked at the best category of sleds for your dollar, we concentrated on the 600cc sports sleds. While the 2004 Yamaha SX Viper S has 100cc more than the Rev, F6 and 600 Pro X2, its horsepower characteristics are right in line with those three models.

At just under 120 horsepower, the Viper S should share a very similar power-to-weight ratio with the best 600 sportsters, as it is a bit heavier thanks to its triple cylinder engine versus twins found in the other three sleds.

The Viper S is one of two Yamaha sleds that fall into snowmobiling "limbo" this season. Foremost is the "S" Viper, but the all-new 600cc three-cylinder Venom shares a similar fate. Yamaha

doesn't have a full-blown "power" 600 like the other guys, but has these two Viper-based sleds falling on either side of them from a performance standpoint.

The 700cc triple cylinder Viper S crosses into two areas: 600cc sports performance and 700cc trail sports. We unapologetically state that we have always enjoyed the Viper. Yes, the first year production models came with stiffer suspensions than we were led to believe, but Yamaha has settled that point.

For the guy who wants a softer suspension setting and more trail comfort, there's the Viper ER with key start and reverse gear. The sports-minded will take to the "S" version. Sporty handling comes directly from the use of premium quality Ohlins shock absorbers up front. The Ohlins add consistency to the suspension action and multiple "clicker" adjustability to compression damping.

A new variable rate shock in the ProAction rear suspension makes a noticeable difference for 2004. There's also a special "Rip Saw" pattern Camoplast-built track for aggressive bite when you rip open the three 33mm flat slide carbs on this 696cc triple.

For 2004, the SX Viper S is an excellent alternative to twin cylinder 600cc sports sleds. The sound alone of this sweetheart triple may be enough to seal the deal. This Yamaha has attitude and handling to back it up!—AS

Norman Emler,

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